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NPS San Francisco Bay Area Network Natural Resource & Science Monthly Update

September 2009

Wildlife

Coho Monitoring Summary Available*

A four-page project summary is now available on the coho salmon monitoring for Redwood Creek. The summary discusses the 3-year lifecycle, and highlights the population trends of each of the three cohorts that inhabit the creek. The briefing can be viewed and downloaded [here](#):

Pinnacles Raptors in 'Bay Nature'

Bay Nature published an article on Protecting Raptors and Climbers at Pinnacles National Monument. The article by Reinhard Cate tells the story of how monitoring informs the management of climbing routes. The article also includes a wonderful photo taken by the Raptor Biologist, Gavin Emmons. To find the article and see the photo go to [BayNature.org](#). Click on the Articles tab.

Vegetation

Prescribed Burns Benefit Native Species

Two prescribed fire projects involving 4 days of burning are planned at Golden Gate NRA this fall between Sept. and Nov. '09. One day of burning at Milagra Ridge near Pacifica and one day of burning in the Marin Headlands west of Sausalito will be done *as part of a study* to compare strategies for restoring endangered mission blue butterfly habitat. The mission blue butterfly research burns will be confined to small metal burn boxes that are 5 meters by 5 meters in area and 1 meter in height.

Two days of burning in the Marin Headlands along the Bobcat Trail in Gerbode Valley will be done to *begin removal* of an infestation of tall fescue, an invasive, non-native grass. The Gerbode burn will be done in 10 to 20 acre subunits for a total project area of 60 acres.

Burning will only take place if weather conditions allow. Appropriate wind, temperature, relative humidity and atmospheric conditions will help ensure firefighter and public safety. Burning will also be done in coordination with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District to ensure good smoke dispersion, however smoke may be seen or smelled from a distance.

Trails in the project area will be temporarily closed while burning is in progress. For more information see: [Milagra Ridge](#) and [Marin Headlands](#).

Alcatraz Island Seabird Update (Aug. '09)

Most of the seabirds on Alcatraz have now fledged and are off on their own at sea for the next few years to learn how to find food and avoid predators. Western Gull & California Gull chicks have fledged, but a few young Western Gulls can still be seen on the island and also along the coast and the wharf. If you're seeing a large, dark grayish gull the size of an adult nearby, you're likely seeing a fledgling from Alcatraz. Pigeon Guillemots chicks have fledged as well, including a couple that we were able to access

to watch their progress via bird nest boxes or old buildings. The adults are also no longer around the island. The Black Oystercatcher pair on the island were successful in fledging 1 chick this year; it's the 7th chick to have fledged (of a potential of 3 per year) Alcatraz since 1997. Oystercatchers can be seen around the island year round, so they'll likely be spotted off and on throughout the winter. Brandt's & Pelagic Cormorants were not seen through the month of August, but we'll patiently await their return, along with the other seabirds, early next spring. Birds will start returning to establish territories once again as early as February. For more information on Alcatraz Island seabirds, contact Sara Acosta at sacosta@prbo.org or Lara Rachowicz at Lara_Rachowicz@nps.gov.

Announcements

The National Parks: America's Best Idea: The stunning new 12-hour, six-part documentary series from Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan tells the story of our national parks and the people who were willing to devote themselves to their creation and preservation. Debuts on KQED starting on Sunday, September 27, at noon on KQED, and repeats at 4pm, 8pm, and 10pm. A new episode airs each evening at 8pm through Friday, October 2 on KQED.

This is Us: Inspired by Ken Burns' – America's Best Idea, KTEH (San Jose) is producing "This is Us" to meet the people behind California's National Parks. Among them are Gavin Emmons, Raptor Biologist and Alacia Welch. The cameras follow them as they dangle from the cliffs of Pinnacles National Monument as they check raptor and condor nests. *This Is Us* "National Parks Special," **airs Sunday, September 27, at 6pm.** A preview can be viewed here: www.kteh.org/preview.

GGRO Invites NPS Staff: Come by to visit Hawk Hill for the hawkwatch -- anytime from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm daily. The best watching is NOW through November tenth. Golden Gate Raptor Observatory folks are on hand to assist with identifications. Nineteen species of hawks, eagles, falcons, kites, harriers, and ospreys can't be wrong. BYO binoculars. Call GGRO 415-331-0730 with questions or visit www.ggro.org. You can also hear the daily hawk report on 415-561-3030

GGRO Celebrates its 25th Anniversary: As part of a suite of activities and celebrations surrounding the GGNRA's 25th anniversary, two free events are taking place in the Marin Headlands. For more information go to: [GGRO Anniversary](#).

- October 24, Saturday and October 25, Sunday: Scientific Displays, Radiotelemetry Demonstrations, Live Non-releasable Raptors, Kid Crafts, GGRO 25th Anniversary Product Sales, Visits to Hawk Hill, Banding Demonstrations, and Raptor Art. Ongoing, 10am-4pm. No registration required. FREE!

- October 25, Sunday: All the above and the GGRO Symposium - talks on GGRO science and conservation about what we've learned over 25 years. Speakers from GGRO, UC Davis, and SF State University, presenting results of their research with GGRO. Schedule TBA (10am-4pm). *No registration required. Seating will be first come, first served. FREE!*

Note: All Inventory & Monitoring items are indicated with an *

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